

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIII, Issue No. 352

THURSDAY DECEMBER 18, 2003

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

I N S I D E

Around CNMI

Passenger fee assures FAA-funded projects

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

The proposed collection of passenger fees at all CNMI airports would secure the needed 10-percent matching fund for all airport improvement projects that are funded by the Federal Aviation Administration, according to executive director Carlos H. Salas of Commonwealth Ports Authority.

He said the proposed fee—also called the Passenger Facility Charge—would assure the FAA that the CNMI can put up the needed 10-percent

share in the AIP.

The AIP funds are usually given to airports across the United States 18 months before the projects take place.

“The passenger fee is form of assurance to FAA that there is a local share of 10 percent for the matching fund. If we implement the PFC, we would get the 10 percent from there,” said Salas in an interview.

With the said project, the CPA is optimistic that there would be no problem in matching the 10 percent needed under the AIP programs. The remaining money to be generated from

the PFC would be used to pay off the debt service of the CPA-airport division.

According to a feasibility study conducted by the CPA, all CNMI airports are projected to generate at least \$2.3 million a year from the collection of the proposed fee, which could be used for various airport improvement projects.

The study also noted that there would be a conservative 2-percent growth per year in tourist traffic at all three CNMI airport for the next 10 years.

Under the proposal, \$4.50 would be collected from

departing passengers, with airline companies collecting the fee through sold airline tickets. The fee is similar to the terminal fee collected by other airports abroad.

The PFC is still under negotiation but CPA has given all signatory airlines serving the Commonwealth up to March 23 to submit their recommendations and comments on the project.

This as the ports authority thoroughly looks into the concerns raised several by airline firms on the exemption of inter-island travelers.

MDRT seeks help to become official group

By MARIAN A. MARAYA
REPORTER

The House Committee on Health and Welfare is amenable to sponsoring legislation that would establish by statute the Multi-Disciplinary Response Team as an official organization, House Leadership spokesperson Charles Reyes disclosed.

This came following a request reportedly made by MDRT Coordinator Esther Milne to Committee Chairman Crispin Ogo during a meeting this week.

MDRT, a program comprised of many CNMI agencies, provide a coordinated and complete response to cases of adult sexual assault and child physical and sexual abuse. The program is under the Department of Public Health.

“What they want to do is have this office established formally by statute so that they can get funding allocations more easily. That was one of their objectives in meeting with Rep. Ogo. And he was very receptive to that idea,” reported Reyes.

Ogo has reportedly asked the House legal counsel to draft a bill to this effect.

Based on the meeting with Milne, the Health and Welfare Committee learned that MDRT receives federal financial assistance, although

this source of funding is not stable and is subject to review every couple of years.

Milne reportedly asked for \$50,000 for the MDRT coordinator’s position.

“Rep Ogo is very open to the funding [request]. In fact, he brought in Isidro Atalig Sablan, the financial consultant for Rep. Norman Palacios, the chairman of the Ways and Means. He [Sablan] came in at the meeting and looked at different ways to get this money for this cause,” said the public information officer.

“This program is very important because oftentimes sexual assault victims, especially children, have to go through the traumatic experience of going through different government agencies. What happens here is that there’s one central location and all these agencies come together to form a team and they work on the case,” Reyes explained.

The MDRT was created pursuant to a memorandum of understanding the Office of the Attorney General, Department of Public Safety, Department of Community and Cultural Affairs (Division of Youth Services), Department of Public Health and the Public School System.

Representatives from these agencies comprise the MDRT Policy Council.

Pageant contestants go through personality development seminar

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Candidates to the 2004 Miss Northern Marianas beauty pageant went through a rigorous Enrichment Training Program Saturday at the Hyatt Regency Saipan in efforts to educate the candidates on personality development issues, including proper public speaking, poise, and table manners.

The Enrichment Training Program, held at the Giovanni’s Restaurant, also tackled diet and nutrition, stress and time management, among others.

The training was coordinated by the Women’s Affairs Office and was conducted the Northern Marianas Beauty Pageant Association.

The session began at 9am and ran through the afternoon prior to the scheduled retreat of the NMBPA organizers and candidates. The contestants also went through basic make-up application technique training with Joy Yumul, a known Filipina model.

The Women’s Affairs Office and the NMBPA invited Duty Free-Saipan president Marian

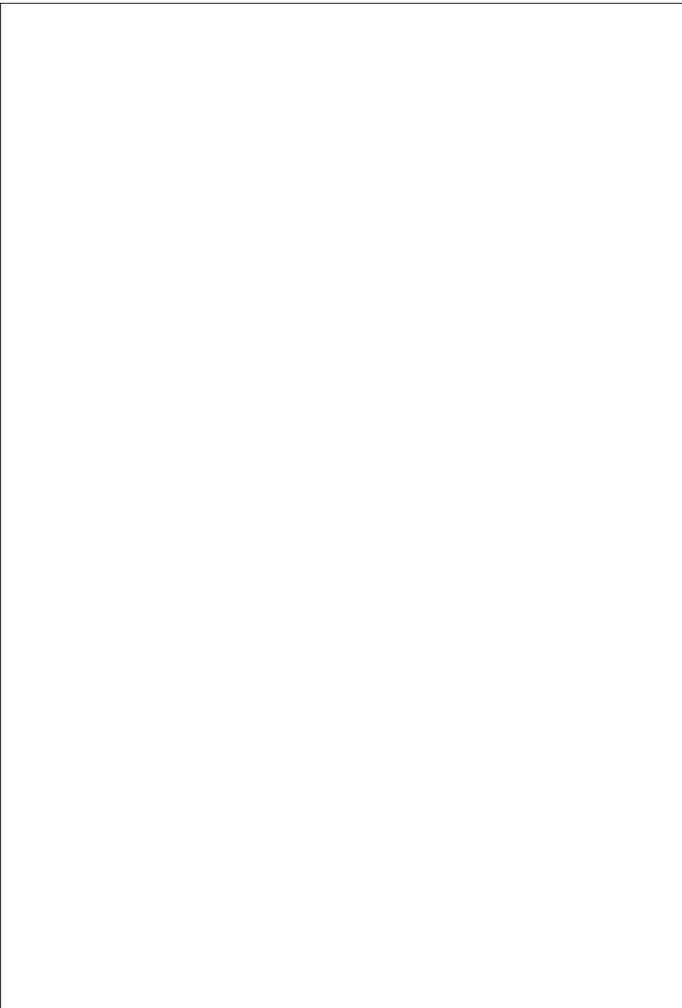
Aldan Pierce, nutrition expert Jill Venderkin, L&T corporate communications specialist Teri Flores, and Madel Cosico, Hyatt Food and Beverage assistant director.

The 2004 candidates have been going through a series of trainings for personality development to help them get through the contest’ basic poise and development criteria.

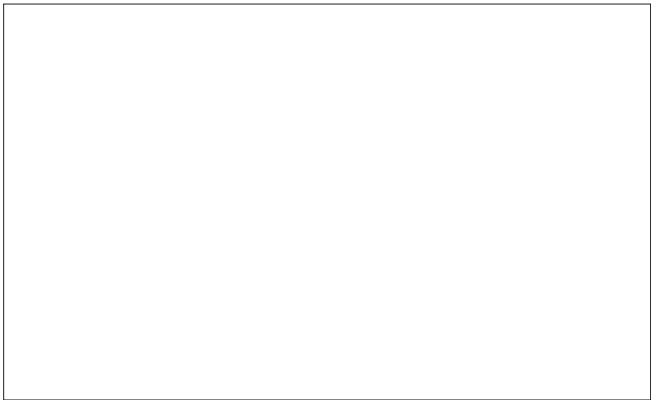
The candidates would compete against each other on March 20 at the Hotel Nikko Saipan. They would vie for several awards, including Best in National Costume, Best in Swimwear, Best in Long Gown, and the top three awards: Miss CNMI Universe, Miss CNMI-International, and Miss-CNMI South Pacific. Winners of the top three awards would represent the Northern Marianas in upcoming beauty contests this year.

The candidates this year are former Miss Teen CNMI Gina Duenas, 2003 Liberation Day Princess Rayna Camacho, Leiana K. Ogumoro, Cassandra DLG. Fejeran, Valerie Ann M. Babauta, Kenyelyn Ariola, Louiena Pangelinan, and Tracy Del Rosario.

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WEATHER FORECAST





PICTURE TIME: 2:25 A.M., DECEMBER 17, 2003
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


A monsoon trough extends from 6N130E through a tropical disturbance near 8N145E and finally to near 5N160E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms associated with the disturbance are found in the Mariana islands as well as between Yap and Chuuk or between 4N and 16N from 139E to 153E. Just east of the monsoon trough, a surface trough of low pressure continues to near the equator at 168E. Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms are developing north and east of the trough or within 100 miles either side of a line from 9N160E to the equator at 173E, including Kosrae. Trade-wind convergence is producing scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms across portions of the Marshall islands, between 4N and 16N from 170E to 180.


 **SAIPAN AND TINIAN**
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.


 **GUAM AND ROTA**
Cloudy and breezy with scattered showers, some locally heavy, and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 20-25 mph. Gusting in 35 mph in showers.
Temperature: Lows near 78. Highs near 86.


 **PALAU**
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.




















 **POHNPEI**
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10 kt.

 **YAP AND ULITHI**
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 10 kt.

 **KOSRAE**
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Southeast at 10 kt.

 **CHUUK**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers with a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: Northeast at 10-15 kt.

 **MAJURO**
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers and a slight chance of thunderstorms.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Cloudy	61F (16C)	49F (9C)
 Beijing	Sunny	44F (7C)	26F (-3C)
 Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	86F (30C)	72F (22C)
 London, England	Cloudy	56F (13C)	45F (7C)
 Los Angeles	Cloudy	69F (21C)	51F (11C)
 Manila	Cloudy	88F (31C)	71F (22C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	73F (23C)	54F (12C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	84F (29C)	75F (24C)
 New York, NY	Cloudy	52F (11C)	48F (9C)
 Osaka	Rain	54F (12C)	46F (8C)
 Paris	Cloudy	53F (12C)	41F (5C)
 Pusan	Rain	58F (14C)	43F (6C)
 Rome	Partly Cloudy	55F (13C)	39F (4C)
 Salem, Oregon	Rain	54F (12C)	38F (3C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	64F (18C)	47F (5C)
 Seoul	Rain	52F (11C)	45F (7C)
 Tokyo	Rain	55F (13C)	49F (9C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	60F (16C)	48F (9C)

Guerrero: Yangetmai has the right to question Teacher Rep poll result

Board of Education member Herman Guerrero commented yesterday that Marianas High School teacher James Yangetmai has the prerogative to question the results of the recently concluded Teacher Representative election, which the Association of Commonwealth Teacher candidate lost to Kagman High School teacher



Guerrero

Ambrose Bennett. “Anyone [who] is running can always question [the election result]. I think they [administration] need to ensure whether he has valid points or not. If it’s not valid, then at least you settle the issue. And there’s no cloud hanging over the whole process. “It’s a democratic process. People who lose sometimes ask or think there are discrepancies or procedures [that were] not followed. If that is the case then the people that are conducting the election needs to refute them and say that this is what we did, and this the process and the procedures,” said the official, who recently lost the BOE chairmanship to Roman Benavente. Yangetmai, who lagged behind Bennett by 16 votes in Monday’s poll, hinted of possible vote manipulation, casting

doubts on the election’s credibility. ACT claimed the process was not valid and fair, as it allegedly lacked transparency. The group raised the absence of its own representative at the polling center. “I guess in any election, there’s a need to be clear on the process and procedures. If the one who lost is questioning the validity of the election then perhaps they need to revisit [the issue] and make sure there’s no doubt that what they certified is true and correct. The process has to be followed and it has to be transparent so nobody can question it,” insisted Guerrero, who called on House legislators yesterday. The BOE member representing Saipan was also curious over the dismal turnout in Monday’s election.

“When you only have 28 percent [of] eligible voters voting, that’s an extremely low turnout. With this kind of turnout, there’s no clear mandate from the teachers. So it’s questionable. One can raise the question why you don’t have many who voted? There’s a lot of questions why,” he asserted. Gov. Juan N. Babauta proclaimed Bennett’s victory on Tuesday, a day after the Teacher Representative poll was held here Monday and simultaneously on Rota and Tinian. The chief executive stressed that teacher representation in the BOE is constitutionally mandated. He said that concerns raised over the selection has prompted his office to hold the election so that all public school teachers in the CNMI could choose a representative that would truly represent them.

Babauta credited the Public School System, the BOE, the

PSS legal counsel, the Attorney General’s Office and the administration for putting together a fair and objective selection process. Of the 500 full-time teachers who were eligible to vote, Babauta confirmed that only 142 teachers or 28 percent cast their votes. He lamented the minimal participation. According to the breakdown, Yangetmai garnered 62 votes while Bennett gained 78 votes. Two ballots were reportedly cast without votes. Babauta explained that only full time teachers were eligible to vote in this election, quoting PSS’ definition of full time teachers as any person who is employed by the Public School System and has the primary responsibility for the education, instruction or provides related services for one or more students. *(Marian A. Maraya)*

Paras signs payment schedule with CHC

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

Paras Enterprises president Juan T. Guerrero has signed a payment schedule agreement with the Department of Public Health only last week. Earlier, Paras legal counsel Mark Smith clarified that no agreement had been reached yet as of Jan. 8 as previously agreed by both parties. Guerrero said yesterday that Paras signed the payment schedule only last Jan. 14. On January 16, he said Paras received an additional \$100,000 payment from DPH. Based on the schedule, the department will give another payment of \$80,000 to Paras on Jan. 30 and some \$50,000 on Feb. 13. Guerrero said Paras and DPH continue to negotiate for the \$50,000 billing. “We have submitted our billing for \$50,000. I don’t know why they’re disputing our billing now when in the last six years,

they never did,” said Guerrero. He said Paras submitted \$248,000 billing to DPH as of Jan. 7, 2004. Based on the schedule, the DPH only acknowledged some \$230,000. “There is some flexibility but we’ll still pursue what is really due us,” said Guerrero, adding that the department itself is charging Paras some \$11,000 for outstanding hospital bills. This amount would be assessed against the last payment to Paras. “We’ll settle that but I’m not really sure how much we owe them so we have to discuss that,” he said. Guerrero also clarified that he has not signed any expiration transfer agreement with the department, which would “legalize” the transfer of Paras employees to the Commonwealth Health Center. Some authorities, however, said that a consensual transfer agreement with Paras is no longer needed

since its contracts with employees provide that their termination of employment goes with Paras’ contract termination with CHC. Both parties have agreed to finalize their payment schedule in view of the DPH’ shift to direct hiring of nursing staff effective Jan. 1, 2004. Paras and other agencies’ contracts with CHC ended on Dec. 31, 2003 but transfer negotiations dragged along pending the settlement of the government’s debt with the companies and the lack of funded FTEs or positions at the department. On Jan. 2, Finance released \$100,000 each to Paras and Saipan Employment Agency Services as partial payment. The government terminated its contracts with agencies on the belief that direct hiring would result in better delivery of health care and boost employee morale. The direct hiring aims to implement a uniform pay for all nursing staff.

DEQ heightens illegal dumping campaign

The Division of Environmental Quality warned that it would impose a fine on anyone caught illegally dumping trash on the islands. DEQ director John I. Castro Jr. urged the public to respect the no littering signs the agency has installed at beach parks and other areas. “We will assess a fine. Our regulations allow us to impose up to \$25,000 per day of violation,” Castro said. The DEQ hopes that the move will deter the public from illegally disposing of trash and household wastes. Castro said trash should be disposed of at the Lower Base

Refuse Transfer Station or the Marpi landfill. “Help us. It’s not just the DEQ’s job to keep Saipan beautiful but it’s also the public’s responsibility,” Castro added. The Environmental Inter-agency Cleanup Operation Team, of which DEQ is a member, and volunteers from non-profit group MOVER recently conducted an emergency cleanup in Garapan’s Makaka beach site, which had deteriorated due to illegal dumping. According to EICOT chairman Benny Pangelinan, people just ignored the DEQ’s no-littering sign at the site. *(John Ravelo)*

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CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 60

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
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Opinion

EDITORIAL

Debate Social Security now

Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan has a knack for jump-starting debates about the economy. In 1996, he memorably described an overvalued stock market as suffering from “irrational exuberance,” infuriating the Clinton White House. On Wednesday, he did it again by urging Congress to trim—not slash—Social Security and Medicare benefits “as soon as possible” to help curb a federal budget deficit expected to reach \$521 billion annually in 2005.

It took years for the stock market bubble to pop, but lawmakers can't wait that long to address a deficit projected to increase by \$2.4 trillion over the next decade — and by \$5 trillion if President Bush's tax cuts are made permanent. By 2009, the annual interest payment on the debt will be \$7,074 for every family.

What shocked people about Greenspan's speech was that he defended the White House's huge tax cuts for the wealthy even as he described ways to reduce Social Security benefits. The juxtaposition pulled the deficit and Social Security problems squarely into the national debate in an election year, right where these issues should be.

Greenspan's larger message was on target: The retirement of the 77 million baby boomers, starting in 2008 when the first of them turn 62, will overwhelm Social Security if nothing is done.

The issue is entwined with the growing deficit because Social Security funds, currently in the black, are basically used to finance the deficit, an action that helps dampen interest rates. Whether “doing something” should at least involve delaying tax cuts wasn't on Greenspan's agenda, but it is certainly on the political table. Like many of its beneficiaries, the Social Security program, which was started during the Depression, has passed the 65-year mark and is showing signs of wear and tear. When it was born, about 40 workers paid in to finance one retiree; today the ratio has dropped to 3 to 1.

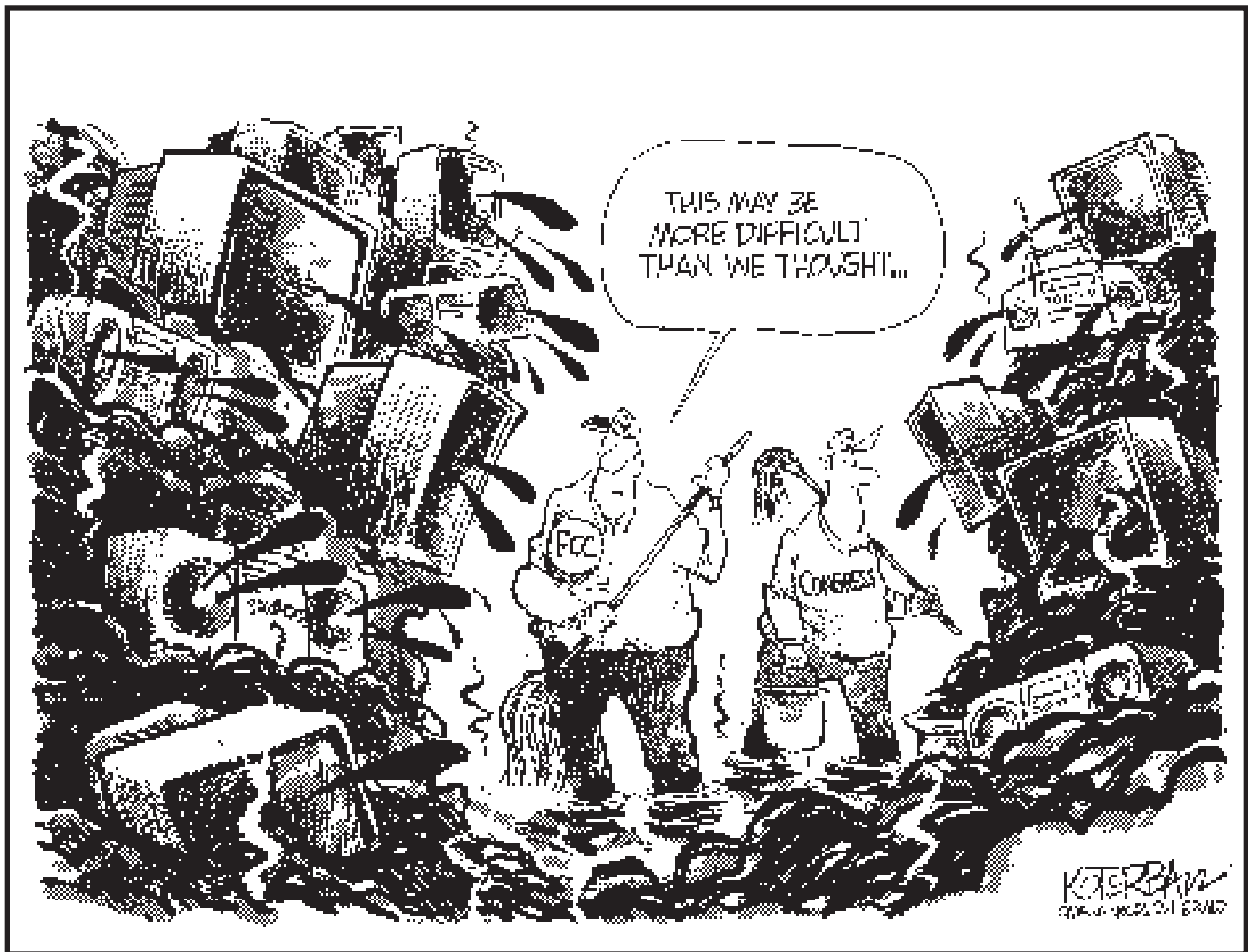
The suggestions that Greenspan made, lowering cost-of-living increases and speeding up the move to a full retirement age of 67, are not new, and they merit discussion. But even small cuts can have large effects on the 31 percent of beneficiaries who rely on Social Security for 90 percent or more of their income in retirement.

If tax cuts are made permanent, as Bush demands, the top 1 percent of earners would by 2011 receive an average \$62,000 annual benefit, according to an Urban Policy Institute-Brookings Institution study. The current average Social Security benefit is \$922 a month.

Social Security needs changes in order to save itself. But it shouldn't bear the burden of helping reduce a deficit produced by war and by diverting trillions of dollars of federal revenue to the wealthy.

Greenspan has joined the two issues. Let the presidential candidates now find a way to tease them apart.

(c) 2004, Los Angeles Times



Focus on the children

Education should be about children, not partisan politics. Yet, sadly, there has been a lot of political posturing on this issue lately. It may be inevitable during an election year.

I admit that this week I, too, ratcheted up the debate with a very poor word choice to describe the leadership of the nation's largest teachers union. I chose my words carelessly, and I am truly sorry for the hurt and confusion they caused.

I especially want to be clear on one point. As ill-considered as my words were, my disappointment was directed only—and I mean only—at the union heads in Washington who have been opposing any and all educational reforms, no matter what the consequences to our children. I have the utmost respect for our nation's teachers: They work hard and have dedicated their lives to children.

My comment was born out of frustration at the depth of the problem in our schools. Let's look at the facts: the Nation's Report Card (the National Assessment of Educational Progress, or NAEP) shows that only one in six African-Americans and one in five Hispanics are proficient in reading by the time they are high school seniors. NAEP math scores are even worse: Only 3 percent of blacks and 4 percent of Hispanics are testing at the “proficient” level. No wonder a recent study claimed a high school diploma has become nothing more than a “certificate of attendance.”

Is our system as a whole preparing the next generation of workers for the global economy? As Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan noted recently, “We need to be forward-looking in order to adapt our educational system to the evolving needs of the economy and the realities of our changing society ... It is an effort that should not be postponed.” That's why I am so passionate about making these historic reforms and drawing attention to the issue.

The old system—the status quo—is one that we must fight to change. President Bush and both parties in Congress understood the urgency of the situation and set in motion a process to fix the problem: the No Child Left Behind Act. The law requires schools to give all students a quality education, provides accountability and choice for parents, and insists that teachers be highly qualified to teach—in other words, that they be knowledgeable in the subjects they are teaching—which is just plain common sense.

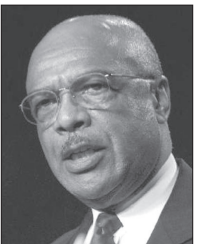
Why the focus on teaching? Because research tells us that teachers are the single most important factor in student achievement.

Some have claimed that No Child Left Behind is intrusive and a violation of states' rights. Of course elementary and secondary education is the traditional province of state and local governments. The specific standards, tests and most of the other major tenets of the law are designed and implemented by the states.

But there is a compelling national interest in education, which is why the federal government is involved and has been for some time.

By ROD PAIGE

Special to The Washington Post

The writer is secretary of education.

The federal government has stepped in to correct overt unfairness or inequality, starting with measures to enforce civil rights and dismantle segregation in the wake of the Brown v. Board of Education decision a half-century ago.

The federal government's first major legislative involvement in education dates to 1965 and the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which marked the first federal aid given to school districts with large percentages of children living in poverty. The law has been renewed many times since, with the last incarnation before the No Child Left Behind Act coming in 1994. It was called the Improving America's Schools Act. Like No Child Left Behind, it required standards, assessment and the identifying of schools for improvement.

There are two main differences between that 1994 legislation and No Child Left Behind. First, the 1994 act was a tepid attempt at accountability, whereas the more recent legislation builds on that first step and sets concrete expectations. Second, this administration is serious about enforcing the law. When President Bush took office, only 11 states were in compliance with the 1994 law. Three-quarters of the states were ignoring the law and simply taking the federal largess.

The days of free money are over. The No Child Left Behind Act says that if you take federal education dollars, we will ask you to be accountable in terms of raising student achievement—for all students, not just some.

But this law is not a one-size-fits-all federal approach. The administration has worked hard to create a climate of cooperation and trust with states, and we have listened. New flexibility is being provided. For example, the progress of special education students and English-language learners can now be measured more accurately.

It's time to make the law successful. We need to create an American public educational system that matches the vision of this law, where we strive for excellence without exclusion, where our children achieve greatness rather than greatly under-achieving, and where 10 or 20 years from now a new generation of adults realizes that we gave them a better life because we had courage and conviction.

ON MY MIND

By RUTH L. TIGHE

Does the San Roque Fiesta Mall have a future? Or will it continue to be the “white elephant” (defined, variously, in the “American Heritage College Dictionary,” 3rd edition, as “a rare expensive possession that is a financial burden to maintain; something of dubious or limited value; an article no longer wanted by its owner; an endeavor or a venture that fails conspicuously”) that it has been ever since the economy collapsed, and hopes for development in the north disappeared?

Northern Marianas College has put a down payment on lease-purchase of the mall with the intent—however far-fetched—of moving large parts of its present campus to the mall, and of better accommodating its proposed Gateway program. But with Gateway’s primary proponent having resigned, and inception of the Gateway program already delayed, and particularly in light of NMC’s financial woes, perhaps it’s time to re-assess just how useful and/or necessary the Fiesta Mall really is to NMC’s future.

The Fiesta Mall is an interesting place, decoratively speaking, but it is not an efficient or effective space, functionally speaking. For starters, it does not provide well in terms of access for the disadvantaged. There are stairs everywhere—some, full staircases, others of only two or three steps—throughout the entire complex. Presumably there are elevators, but given the number of changes in level, not nearly enough to make access convenient.

There is no coherent traffic pattern. It is impossible, for example, to consecutively check out every store by starting at one end and going to the other, without having to double back several times along the way.

It might be possible to convert the most northern of the buildings to an athletic facility for students, but that—together with providing them with gathering, socializing space—could cost a considerable amount of money, not to mention the cost of converting the stores to classrooms and offices and a bookstore and a cafeteria and laboratories and all the other needs of a college campus.

Then there is the cost of maintenance and upkeep. There are plants and fountains and pools throughout. Where will the funding come from to keep them healthy, operational? Who will maintain the power plant? Can the existing water and wastewater system withstand daily use by hundreds of students? Maintenance and upkeep of such awkward facilities, never mind the decorations, is also bound to be costly. How big will the Gateway program have to be to underwrite those costs?

And if the costs of upkeep and maintenance are high, how much of the expected revenue from the Gateway project will be left to do what was originally intended: provide better salaries for staff and faculty, support and enhancement of NMC’s academic programs, and a broadening of the scope of its offerings?

Given its problems, it’s not clear that the Fiesta Mall would appear attractive to many buyers, but given those problems, what is clear is that NMC would be far better off selling it than trying to hold on to it.

On the other hand, NMC’s public radio station KRNm, and more specifically, its manager Carl Pogue, deserves high praise for the entrepreneurship, inventiveness, persistence, and downright zeal he exercised in arranging to bring well-known concert pianist Katya Grineva to Saipan earlier this week.

The concert milieu—a recently remodeled restaurant—was small, informal, clearly never intended as a performance hall. The microphone was on too short a cord. The piano seemed a little fragile, its notes not always as resonant, as true, as those of a concert-quality instrument. A wandering palmetto bug disrupted the proceedings. Nonetheless, the evening was truly magical.

Grineva played a number of familiar pieces, a few less well-known. Her fingers never stumbled in the many fast-paced and demanding runs, trills, glissandos. The piano alternately thundered, sighed and sang under her sensitive touch. It was all achingly beautiful. And the more so because live concert performances are so rare here.

In her formal taffeta gown, the very accomplished artist herself was lovely, gracious, charming.

Pogue’s feat? Having heard that Grineva was on Guam, Pogue decided to try bring her to Saipan. Despite the short notice, he did manage to persuade her to come, did find a venue, did find and get tuned a piano, and did manage, through diligent promotion, to sell enough tickets to make the event a success not only in terms of the performance, but in terms of the station’s fund-raising. Thanks, Carl! And many, many thanks, Katya!

Thanks of a different sort to all those involved in the decision not to raise CHC fees for service at this time. It was a good move!

When CHC again wants to try raise its fees—and it is bound to do so, given the rising costs of everything related to medical care—it might want to try a different approach. It might be useful, for example, to give the public more than 30-days warning before increases go into effect. If a major increase is intended, it might be better to phase in the increase over time.

It might also want to offer some explanations as to why such different rates of increase are being proposed among the varying services—why some rates would be increased by only a few dollars, and others increased by more than \$100, for example.

Everyone accepts—albeit sometimes not too willingly!—that rate increases are inevitable. But good public relations requires that

the community be kept fully apprised of the why, when, how and how much involved.

The belated awareness, by the public, of the proposed hospital rate increases raises the question, once again, of why information about proposed regulations is not more readily available to the public. The Attorney General’s Office is no doubt adhering to the original Trust Territory Code, as incorporated into the Commonwealth Code, which states that prior to adoption of any regulation, the agency shall give at least 30 day’s notice by publishing it in the “Commonwealth Register” and by posting it in convenient places in the civic center and local and government offices.

But particularly given today’s hi-tech capabilities, such measures are primitive at best. A start would be to timely publish the table of contents of each issue of the “Commonwealth Register” in the local newspapers. The Chamber of Commerce attempts to do this in its monthly bulletin, but not only is it sometimes late, but it also reaches only a small portion of the community.

More helpful, of course, would be to put the entire contents of each issue of the Register on-line. If the House and Senate can publish the full text of their bills and laws, if the Public Auditor can publish the full text of his reports, on-line, why could not the AG publish the full text of proposed and approved regulations?

Something to ponder:

“If the world is to avoid a descent into anarchy, in which the only rule is “might makes right,” the world—and particularly the United States—must recognize that “terrorism” is simply a word, a subjective epithet, not an objective reality and certainly not an excuse to suspend rules of international law and domestic civil liberties.

“Every nation—and particularly the United States—must also recognize that in a world filled with injustice, violent outbursts by those hoping desperately for a better life—or simply seeking to strike a blow against injustice or their tormentors before they die—can never be eradicated.

“At best, the frequency and gravity of such outbursts can be diminished by seeking to alleviate—rather than continuing to aggravate—the injustice and humiliations that give rise to them...Perfect security is, and will always be, an illusion, and “victory” in a “war on terrorism” is no more likely than in a “war on poverty,” a “war on crime,” or a “war on drugs.”

“It is long overdue, but not too late, for the American people to liberate themselves from the aggression and self-destructive paranoia inflicted on them by unscrupulous abusers of an undefinable word.”

(Excerpted from “Terrorism’s world ensnared by a word” by John V. Whitbeck, which appeared in the on-line edition of the 2/17/04 issue of “The International Tribune.”)

The writer is a librarian by profession, and a longterm resident of the CNMI. To contact her, send email to <ruth.tighe@saipan.com>

Know about your municipal council

Res. #7SMC-6RS-50: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Crispin L. Deleon Guerrero for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair Grand Prize Winner, Plant Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-51: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Deron Flores for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair First Place Winner, Plant Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-52: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Leonardo Tudela for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair Second Place Winner, Plant Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-53: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Bill Ada for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair Third Place Winner, Plant Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-54: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Joaquin V. Deleon Guerrero for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair Grand Prize Winner, Animal Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-55: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Randy Tudela for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair First Place Winner, Animal Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-56: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Edward Flores for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair Second Place Winner, Animal Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-57: To recognize and congratulate Mr. Ramon Camacho and Randall Aguon for being crowned the 24th Annual Saipan Agricultural Fair Third Place Winner, Animal Division, held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-6RS-58: Recognizing and congratulating 24th Annual Agricultural Fair Youth Division Winners Antonette Cabrera; Joshua Lizama; Stanley Santos; Joshua Cabrera; Byron Cruz; Joven Tycueno; Jake Borja and Dennis Cruz held on Saturday, May 24, 2003.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-01: To pay tribute to the memory of and to extend a sincere and heartfelt condolence and sympathy to the family of the late Honorable Joseph “Schuubmwemwar” Taman Ogumoro upon his sudden and untimely death on Tuesday, June 24, 2003, at the age of 48 years.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-02: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Mini Phan C. Ta, Representing the Chinese Community, for being crowned the 2003 Saipan Liberation Day Queen on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, at the American Memorial park, Garapan, Saipan.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-03: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Rayna Lizama Camacho, Representing the Chamorro Community, for being crowned the 2003 Saipan Liberation Day Royal Princess on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, at the American Memorial park, Garapan, Saipan.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-04: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Pearl Castro Kaipat, Representing the Refalawasch Community, for being crowned the 2003 Saipan Liberation Day 1st Runner-Up on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, at the American Memorial park, Garapan, Saipan.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-05: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Clarissa Carlos Mobel, Representing the Palauan Community, for being crowned the 2003 Saipan Liberation Day 1st Princess on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, at the American Memorial park, Garapan, Saipan.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-06: Relative to recognizing and congratulat-

By GREGORIO V. DELEON GUERRERO

Deleon Guerrero is chairman of the Saipan and Northern Islands Municipal Council.



ing Miss Jerusalem D. Malaban, Representing the Filipino Community, for being crowned the 2003 Saipan Liberation Day 2nd Princess on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, at the American Memorial park, Garapan, Saipan.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-07: Relative to recognizing and congratulating Miss Ah Young Lee, Representing the Korean Community, for being crowned the 2003 Saipan Liberation Day 3rd Princess on Tuesday, July 1, 2003, at the American Memorial park, Garapan, Saipan.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-08: To recognize and congratulate Boat “Bunita” Captain Mike Fleming and Anglers Ruben Garda and Randy Harpu for winning the Grand Prize at the 19th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament held on Saipan on Saturday and Sunday, July 5 and 6, 2003, respectively.

Res. #7SMC-7RS-09: To recognize and congratulate Boat “Consolacion” (Guam) Captain George Perez and Anglers Luis Perez and Jose Santos for winning the 1st place Billfish Category at the 19th Annual Saipan International Fishing Tournament held on Saipan on Saturday and Sunday, July 5 and 6, 2003, respectively.

3 men arrested for alleged assault

By EDITH G. ALEJANDRO
REPORTER

Authorities arrested Monday night three men who have been a subject of intensive investigations by law enforcers since November 2003 when a 43-year-old man lodged a complaint against them.

Police department spokesperson Sgt. Tom Blas Jr. said Martin F. Borja, 38; Chris W. Taimanglo, 20; and William M. Faisao, 19, were arrested based on the arrest warrants issued against them by Judge Juan Lizama.

Blas said COPPS officers Jesse Seman and Sandy Hambros arrested the three suspects in connection with a Nov. 16, 2003, assault case lodged by Saburo Stewart, 43.

Lizama issued the warrants after the police released the results of its investigation on the case. The officers immediately served the warrants to the suspects. All three were brought to the Adult Correctional facility in Susupe where they were booked and detained pending bail hearing.

The investigation report showed that the police department received a call for assistance around 1:28am of Nov. 16, 2003, due to a disturbance in the house of Stewart in Kagman III area. Medics were also dispatched due to injuries sustained by the victim.

According to the report, the victim and two of the three suspects were involved in a fight outside the victim's house. During the squabble, the suspects used rocks, a machete, and a baseball bat to allegedly attack the victim, causing serious injuries.

Stewart reportedly sustained lacerations on the back, legs, and arms, as well as other cuts and bruises on his body.

After the investigation, probers determined the culpability of the three suspects and asked that arrest warrants be issued against them.

The suspects are now facing disturbing the peace, assault and battery, assault with dangerous weapons, and criminal mischief charges.

Taiwanese boat seized off New Caledonia

A Taiwanese fishing boat has been intercepted south of New Caledonia for fishing illegally.

The French high commission in the New Caledonia capitol of Noumea says the ship had been spotted by a French surveillance aircraft and an inspection showed it carried dozens of tons of fresh and frozen fish.

The interception comes just days after the captain of another Taiwanese fishing boat was jailed for six months and fined almost US\$200,000 for fishing illegally. (RNZI/PIR)



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

EMPHASIS ON EDUCATION

Saipan Southern High School students gather around Gov. Juan N. Babauta during the chief executive's recent visit at the campus, in line with the administration's education program. Babauta has been putting emphasis on public education as an important tool in the eventual recovery of the local economy.

MPLA board in limbo due to lack of quorum

By LIBERTY DONES
REPORTER

The lack of a quorum on the Board of Directors of the Marianas Public Lands Authority is stymieing efforts to move ahead on critical projects, including 36 new offers for land compensation that require the board's approval.

Only two members remain on the Board—chairperson, Ana Demapan-Castro and vice chairman Manny Villagomez—following the resignation of a member and term expiration of another.

Member Pedro M. Atalig resigned from the board effective Jan. 1, 2004, while member

Pedro Igitol's term expired on Dec. 31, 2003.

The board is composed of five seats, with one representative each from Tinian and Rota and three from Saipan. The CNMI Constitution also provides that one of the directors should be of Carolinian descent, while another should represent women.

At the moment, Demapan-Castro represents Saipan and the women's sector, while Villagomez represents Tinian. This means nobody is representing Rota, the Carolinians, and two seats for Saipan.

This, even as the MPLA has already readied 36 new offers for land compensation that re-

quire the board's approval.

"We have to get the board's approval before we can make the offer but the board can't possibly meet right now for lack of quorum," said MPLA commissioner Henry S. Hofschneider.

The board normally holds a regular meeting on the third Thursday of the month.

Hofschneider said that some names have been floated for appointment by the governor to the board. He declined to identify them.

Meantime, he said that 38 landowners have accepted the MPLA's initial offers and are like likely to get their compensation within the month.

"Once Finance puts the

money in MPLA's special account, we can start cutting checks," he said.

Hofschneider said that MPLA is offering "just and fair" compensation to landowners.

The MPLA board approved 75 folders for immediate land compensation last month. This came soon after the CNMI government floated a \$40-million bond, with the proceeds to be used primarily to settle the longstanding land claims by individuals against the government. The first batch of claims included acquisition of rights-of-way.

The Land Compensation Act mandates the government to prioritize the payment for lands used for rights-of-way,

then ponding basins, and later wetlands and other claims.

The payment to landowners is based on the valuation at the time of taking by the Commonwealth.

The MPLA has listed some 120 eligible land claimants in the CNMI.

Of the \$40-million bond, only about \$27 million will be used for land compensation, as \$11 million has been allotted to fund a pending prison project. The bond's Hawaii-based underwriter also deducted \$1.5 million from the total amount for cost of the bond issuance.

The government is given 30 years to pay off the loan at an annual interest of 6.75 percent.

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World



United States

Bush budget said to cause \$2.75T deficits

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Bush's budget would produce deficits totaling \$2.75 trillion over the next decade, the Congressional Budget Office projected Friday in the first authoritative look at the plan's longer-range implications.

The forecast—\$737 billion worse than the budget office expects should Congress ignore Bush's tax and spending plans—is sure to factor into this year's presidential and congressional campaigns.

Bush sent lawmakers a \$2.4 trillion budget for 2005 on Feb. 2, but it projected outward only for five years.

The White House argues that longer-range forecasts are guesswork, but Democrats say the administration wants to hide future deficits that will career out of control as baby boomers begin to retire.

The nonpartisan budget office also forecast that Bush's fiscal plans would produce deficits of \$478 billion this year and \$356 billion in 2005. Both figures are smaller than the shortfalls Bush has projected for those years.

For the decade ending in 2014, however, annual shortfalls never would be smaller than \$242 billion, which would occur in 2007, the budget office said.

After that, they would bounce as high as \$289 billion in 2014.

Last year's shortfall, which exceeded \$374 billion, was the largest ever in dollar terms.

"These are permanent, structural deficits we will never dig our way out of if we follow in the president's path," said Thomas Kahn, Democratic staff director of the House Budget Committee.

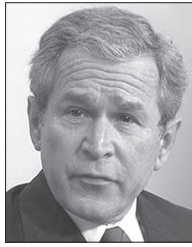
White House budget spokesman Chad Kolton said there frequently are major differences when two organizations make long-range

forecasts of entities as huge as the federal budget and the U.S. economy.

But, he said, "Looking at the first five years of CBO's forecast, it shows we cut the deficit in half within five years"—one of Bush's budget goals.

Two days ago, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan focused attention on the government's long-term fiscal problems by suggesting cuts in Social Security benefits to ease cascading red ink. Members of both parties quickly disavowed benefit reductions.

Democrats, though, hope to use



Bush

the prospect of massive, unrelenting shortfalls as a symbol of what they say is Bush's mismanagement of the economy. Republicans blame the red ink on recession and the costs of war and terror and say Bush has focused his attention on those problems instead of balancing the government's books.

Yet underlining their sensitivity to the deficit problem, six conservative senators sent a letter this week asking Senate Budget Committee Chairman Don Nickles, R-Okla., to produce a fiscal blueprint for balancing the budget in seven years. That would exceed Bush's goal of halving shortfalls in five years.

IRS says tax refunds up almost \$100

WASHINGTON (AP)—The first batch of checks mailed from the Internal Revenue Service this year showed the average tax refund climbed \$97 compared to those issued at the same time last year, according to figures released Friday.

Refunds mailed so far this year average \$2,292, a 4.5 percent increase over refunds mailed at the same time in 2003. Tax refunds tend to be higher during the first weeks of the tax filing season, when taxpayers expecting checks hurry to file their returns.

"It's significantly higher than it was a year ago, and that's one of the tail winds pushing the economy forward during the first quarter," said Sung

Won Sohn, chief economist with Wells Fargo & Co., a banking company in Minneapolis.

Last week the Treasury Department said, "The president's 2003 tax relief will increase refunds paid this spring by an average of \$300."

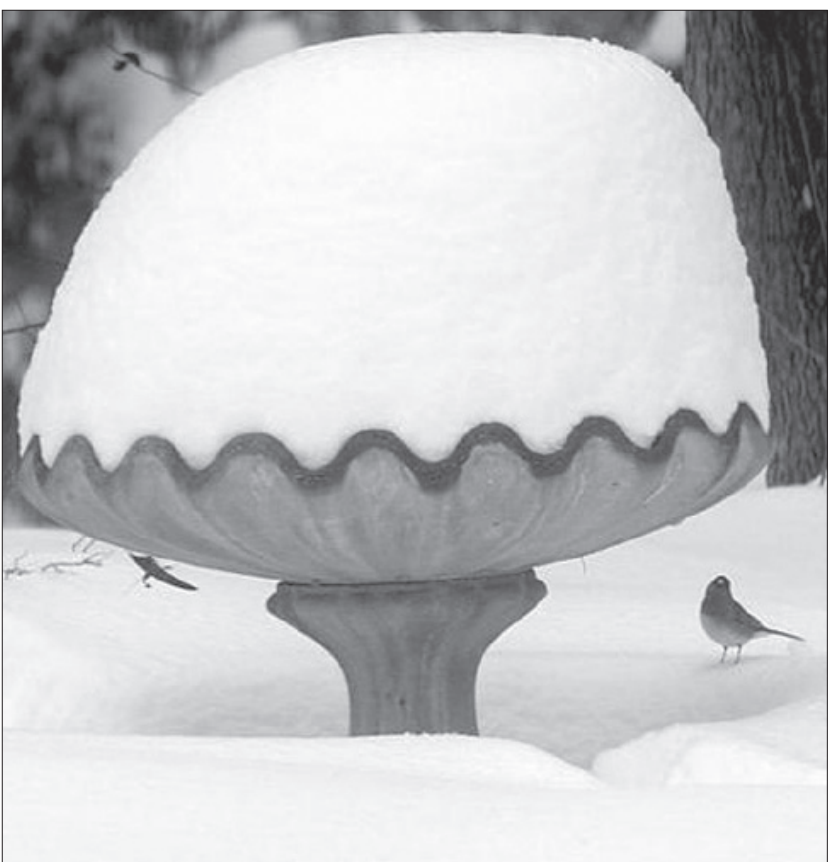
Treasury Department spokeswoman Tara Bradshaw on Friday clarified that figure, saying the average \$300 increase compares this year's expected refunds with projections of the refunds taxpayers would have gotten this year had last summer's \$330 billion tax cut not passed.

Some economists monitoring the refunds said they expected a bigger increase than they've seen so far.

The economists said they can't fully account for the lower-than-expected refunds but cautioned that the numbers may quickly change.

"It does look like it's a little light, but I think it's just too early to tell," said Joel Prakken, chairman of Macroeconomic Advisers LLC, a St. Louis forecasting firm. "I don't have alarm bells going off."

Prakken said taxpayers can expect to get \$40 billion and \$50 billion returned this spring, the proceeds from reduced taxes on dividends and lower income tax rates enacted too late last year to be completely incorporated into paychecks. Whether the money comes in the form of bigger refunds or lower tax bills remains to be seen, he said.



RECORD SNOWFALL

A small bird looks up at the snow piled high on a bird bath in Matthews, N.C., Friday Feb. 27, 2004. A winter storm blanketed parts of the Carolinas with record snow by Friday, making traveling hazardous, stranding motorists and closing schools. Four traffic deaths were attributed to the storm in South Carolina, where state troopers reported more than 1,400 wrecks by noon. In the Charlotte area, county officials said they responded to 86 traffic accidents in a 24-hour period ending at 8 a.m.

NY town mayor marries gay couples

NEW PALTZ, N.Y. (AP)—Twenty-one gay couples exchanged wedding vows on the steps of village hall Friday in a spirited ceremony that opened another front on the growing national debate over gay marriage.

As the ceremonies by 26-year-old Mayor Jason West were ending, the state Health Department asked the attorney general to seek an injunction "to prevent further illegal conduct by the mayor," a department spokesman said.

A call to Attorney General Eliot Spitzer's office was not immediately returned.

West, elected on the Green Party ticket last year in this village 75 miles north of New York City, joined Gavin Newsom of San Francisco as the country's only mayors to marry same-sex couples.

"What we're witnessing in America today is the flowering of the largest civil rights movement the country's had in a generation," West said.

William van Roestenberg, 38, and Jeffrey McGowan, 39, of nearby Plattekill, were the first to wed. Wearing suits, they held hands and carried flowers as the crowd cheered.

"I feel happy and joyful and peaceful," van Roestenberg said. "A little bit of peace has finally come in. I feel proud to be an American."

"Now I'm normal and equal like every one else," he said.

The midday ceremonies ended a little more than an hour after they started.

More than 100 people, mostly supporters of gay marriage, turned out on the green across from village hall, outnumbering family and friends of the couples there to marry. A few scattered protesters carried signs opposing gay marriage.

Jay Blotcher of High Falls, N.Y., said that while West could only give him a certificate and not a marriage license, it was still important to go through the ceremony.

ACROSS THE NATION
Head of US bishops vows to stop abuse

WASHINGTON (AP)—America's top bishop declared Friday that the days of sheltering sex abusers in the Roman Catholic priesthood were "history" as two reports showed how pervasive assaults on minors have been over the last half-century, and that church leaders bore much of the blame.

"The terrible history recorded here today is history," said Bishop Wilton Gregory, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Victims of molestation countered that they remain skeptical of church leaders' good faith.

The two new reports represent an unprecedented look at abuse crisis, partly because they were done with the cooperation of church leaders. They're certain to lead to months of debate on such hot-button issues as whether gays should be screened from the priesthood.

A panel of Catholic lay people charged by the prelates with investigating the abuse crisis, the National Review Board, issued both a survey tallying molestation claims and costs from 1950 to 2002 and a companion study explaining how the problem happened.

The survey found 10,667 abuse claims over the decades.

House speaker OK's 9/11 panel extension

WASHINGTON (AP)—House Speaker Dennis Hastert agreed Friday to

give the independent panel investigating the Sept. 11 attacks more time to finish its work, clearing the way for Congress to formally approve a two-month extension.

Hastert's decision to reverse his previous objections to the extension also defused a separate crisis that threatened to shut down highway programs and part of the Transportation Department.

Al Felzenberg, a spokesman for the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, said the panel was pleased that Congress was working to give it more time.

Hastert, R-Ill., in a letter to the two chairmen of the commission, former New Jersey Republican Gov. Thomas H. Kean and former Rep. Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., acknowledged he had been "reluctant to support this extension" because of the need for Congress to move quickly on the findings of the report.

Ex-law student pleads guilty to slayings

GRUNDY, Va. (AP)—In a deal with prosecutors to spare his life, a one-time Appalachian Law School student pleaded guilty Friday to killing the school's dean, a professor and a student in a 2002 shooting rampage.

Peter Odighizuwa burst into tears as he was sentenced to six consecutive life terms plus 28 years on firearms, capital murder and attempted capital murder charges. He said he wished he could bring back his three victims.

"You're going to be in prison for the rest of your life," Judge Michael Moore said in Buchanan County Circuit Court.

Police said Odighizuwa, who had flunked out of the Appalachian School of Law, brought a gun to campus in January 2002 and killed Dean L. Anthony Sutin, Professor Thomas Blackwell and student Angela Dales. Three other students were wounded.

Odighizuwa, 45, admitted to the slayings as part of a plea agreement to avoid a possible death sentence. He had been diagnosed as a paranoid schizophrenic but was found mentally competent to stand trial.

Kerry: Bush has failed in 9/11 response

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Democrat John Kerry, widely assailed by Republican critics, said Friday that President Bush has failed in his response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and faulted the Republican for breaking promises on the economy, education and health care.

The front-runner used a campaign speech to outline his plan to combat terrorism that relies on stronger intelligence-gathering, law enforcement and international alliances—proposals that Kerry has been touting for more than a year.

The Kerry campaign e-mailed a new Web video to 300,000 of its supporters, accusing Bush of making promises he hasn't kept on the economy, education, jobs, health care, veterans and Social Security. The video shows Bush saying, "The No Child Left Behind Act is opening the door of opportunity to all of America's children," followed by the statement, "No Child Left Behind Act underfunded by \$9 Billion."

Life & Style

Brown sentenced to 60 days in jail

By ELIOTT C. McLAUGHLIN
AP WRITER

Bobby Brown, arrested two months ago for allegedly striking wife Whitney Houston, was sentenced to 60 days in jail Friday for violating his probation.

Brown was more than halfway through a two-year probation stint passed down in January 2003 after he pleaded guilty to a 1996 drunken-driving charge.

The 35-year-old R&B singer had been accused of five violations including a December misdemeanor battery charge in which police said Brown hit Houston, leaving her with a bruised cheek and a cut inside her lip. He's scheduled to appear May 5 in a Fulton County court on that charge.

The other violations involve failing to take drug tests and pay probation fees. Brown also had been accused

of failing to prove that he underwent counseling, completed his house arrest and fulfilled other obligations.

On Friday, Brown was able to show he'd paid the \$105 fees, had gone to counseling and had completed his community service. That was enough for State Court Judge Wayne Purdom to cut his sentence in half, from 120 days to 60 days.

"Since you did complete most of the original conditions, I don't feel obliged to sentence you to 120 days," Purdom told the singer.

There was no mention of the battery charge during the hearing. Brown thanked the judge before being quickly escorted to jail.

Houston, the Grammy-winning pop singer, didn't attend the sentencing. Brown's family and attorney said they

didn't know why she wasn't there.

Afterward, his mother, Carole Brown, said she thought the judge was "very fair." She added that she'll support her son when he completes his jail sentence.

"I will support him in all his endeavors, and I'm sure they are all going to be positive," she said. "He's not a bad boy, Bobby Brown."

Brown's attorney, Vincent Dimmock, brought a suit for the singer to wear, but the judge wanted Brown to be treated like an ordinary prisoner. Brown wore the standard orange DeKalb County jumpsuit to the hearing.

The singer will get credit for the week he has spent in jail since Feb. 20 when his attorney asked that his probation-revocation hearing be continued.

Dimmock, who's also R&B singer



Brown

Jackson pulled over while wearing mask

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, Colo. (AP)—Michael Jackson was pulled over by police and asked to identify himself after shopping at a Wal-Mart while wearing a ski mask.

An employee called police Tuesday, police Lt. Bill Kimminau said. The employee gave a description of the vehicle and Jackson was stopped a short time later.

Authorities asked Jackson to identify himself, which he did by removing his mask.

"There were no problems, and that was it," Kimminau said.

Jackson spokeswoman Raymone Bain said the incident was a trifle.

"The police car pulled to the side and just asked that he show his face, and he did, and that was it," Bain said. "There was no altercation or any kind of encounter."

The singer is known to wear disguises when in public.

Jackson is staying at a 56-acre ranch in

Old Snowmass while vacationing with his children. He has been keeping a relatively low profile, but has been spotted at several shops in nearby Aspen.

He is facing child molestation charges in California.

His visit was announced in a press release Bain issued Feb. 20 to address rumors the 45-year-old singer had checked himself into a drug rehabilitation facility.

"Michael's children indicated to him a few days ago that they'd like to see and play in the snow," Bain said. "Mr. Jackson was enjoying his getaway until ... someone deliberately and viciously began reaching out to media organizations with this claim."

Bain also released a statement from Jackson that said: "I am appalled. Let me state for the record that I have not checked myself into any rehabilitation center in Aspen, Colorado; I am here for a few days with my children. I am outraged by these constant rumors."

Pop star Michael Jackson, wearing a red surgical mask, waves to fans from the balcony of his suite at the Carlton hotel in Cannes, French Riviera in this May 8, 1997 file photo.

AP

Broadcasters say they're cleaning airwaves

WASHINGTON (AP)—"Bubba the Love Sponge" is gone and radio shock Howard Stern is on hiatus from some stations. TV networks are time-delaying certain shows to make sure inappropriate material doesn't make it onto the airwaves.

Broadcast executives cited these and other examples Thursday as evidence they are taking heed of the government's call to clean up the airwaves.

"We at Fox have heard your concerns loud and clear," said Gail Berman, the network's president of entertainment. "We sincerely regret that a few incidents of inappropriate programming have overshadowed the good shows we proudly air on Fox each week."

It was the second time in two weeks that the House Energy and Commerce telecommunications subcommittee queried broadcasters about indecency. The first hearing came on the heels of the notorious Super Bowl halftime show that ended with singer Justin Timberlake exposing Janet Jackson's right breast to 90 million viewers.

"Networks are being proactive in the efforts to clean up the airwaves," said subcommittee chairman Fred Upton, R-Mich., who has sponsored legislation to increase the maximum fine for indecency from \$27,500 to \$275,000.

Several broadcasters endorsed the higher fines. John Hogan, president Clear Channel Radio, said the move

would "serve as a 'shot across the bow' of the industry, putting us all on notice that Congress and the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) are serious about cleaning up the airwaves."

Federal law bars radio stations and over-the-air television channels from airing material that refers to sexual and excretory functions between 6 a.m. and 10 p.m., when children may be tuning in. The rules do not apply to cable and satellite channels and satellite radio.

FCC Chairman Michael Powell and other members of the FCC have criticized radio and TV network executives for not doing more to police the airwaves. They have warned execu-

tives they will face greater scrutiny and more fines if they fail to act.

The most dramatic response came from the nation's largest radio chain, 1,200-station Clear Channel Communications. This week it fired the disc jockey known as "Bubba the Love Sponge," took the Stern show off the six stations it owns and outlined new standards that include immediately suspending any on-air talent accused of airing indecent material by the FCC.

Hogan said he was "ashamed" of the "Bubba" show. The program, which aired in Florida, recently brought a proposed \$755,000 FCC fine for sexually explicit content and other alleged indecency violations.

Get ready for the Awards Awards

By JILL LAWLESS
AP WRITER

LONDON (AP)—Left giddy by the Golden Globes? Excited by the Oscars?

British awards-show addicts dreading withdrawal after Sunday's Academy Awards can prolong their pleasure with a new addition to the calendar—the first-ever Awards Awards.

Seriously.

On March 5, award-givers will gather at London's swanky Dorchester Hotel, hoping to give an acceptance speech for a stainless-steel statuette recognizing excellence in award-giving.

"People seemed to think it was some sort of joke," said Barbara Buchanan, editor of Awards World magazine, which is organizing the event. "We've given professional satirists a field day."

The event does call to mind an episode of the British TV show "Absolutely Fabulous" in which hapless publicist Edina Monsoon attends what she calls the "PR PR Person's Awards Dinner of the Month Lunch."

But in a slightly more real world, awards are big business.

Buchanan estimates there are 18,000 awards ceremonies in Britain each year, ranging from the Rescue Cat of the Year Awards to the glitzy British Academy Film Awards.

Those include the roughly 1,000 trade and industry awards that are held at London's major hotels each year, attracting 5 million people and generating \$185 million in revenue.

"A lot of people say an awards event is like an iceberg—what you see on the night is only a fraction of all the planning that goes on beforehand," she said. "There's a hell of a lot of work in putting an awards ceremony together, and the Awards Awards are a way of acknowledging that."

To that end, trophies will go to organizer of the year, personality of the year, supplier of the year, sponsor of the year and—the booby prize—faux pas of the year.

"We're having a bit of trouble getting people to put themselves forward for that one," Buchanan said.

The event may be short on A-list glamour—two comic impressionists will stand in for celebs—but its high-concept design would make Hollywood proud.

"There's a bit of an Adam and Eve theme," said Buchanan. "We're going to have a virtual cherub on the screen flitting about. The story line goes back to the beginning when God created the Earth, the sky and everything, and what he decided to do on his day off—create an award."

"On stage we're going to have big pearly white gates for heaven, and a fiery pit for hell."

Winners will receive a trophy forged in the shape of three entwined sails. "We ordered the trophies before we thought up the theme," said Buchanan. "But it looks a bit celestial."



Singer Alison Krauss will wear \$2M shoes

NEW YORK (AP)—Stuart Weitzman is Alison Krauss' fairy godfather. The bluegrass singer will wear Weitzman's \$2 million "Cinderella" slippers when she performs two Oscar-nominated songs from "Cold Mountain" during Sunday's Academy Awards ceremony.

"Alison is the only star that can truly wear the Cinderella slipper to the Oscars, she is already country music royalty," Weitzman said in a statement.

The 4 1/2-inch stiletto sandals are adorned with 565 Kwiat diamonds.

This is the third year Weitzman has created such opulent shoes for the Oscars.

In 2002, when actress Laura Elena Harring wore \$1 million sandals - note the inflation in just two years - Weitzman said, "A great picture at a great event can make a great career or break a career. This is serious business. It is not frivolous."

Krauss, 32, won three Grammy Awards earlier this month, including best bluegrass album for "Live" with Union Station.



One of a pair of diamond-adorned shoes created by designer Stuart Weitzman and valued at \$2 million is displayed in Los Angeles, Thursday, Feb. 26, 2004. The shoes are highlighted with Kwiat Diamonds.

CNN anchor blasts lawmakers in commentary

NEW YORK (AP)—CNN's Aaron Brown took a step into political activism this week, saying it was "unconscionable and indefensible" for House leadership to deny an extension to the Sept. 11 commission.

Brown urged viewers Thursday night to protest the decision—less than 24 hours before House Speaker Dennis Hastert agreed to give the independent panel investigating the attacks an extra two months to finish its report.

"Perhaps the speaker and his team assume you do not care," Brown said. "I hope they're wrong. I hope you care enough to write them and e-mail them and call them until they relent. Do that. Do it for the victims and their families. Do it for the country that was attacked and for history."

Brown, a New York City resident, anchored much of CNN's coverage from a Manhattan rooftop on the day of the attacks.

Brown usually begins his "Newsnight" program with light commentary. On Thursday, he said he wanted to discuss "an outrage." Later in the show, when it was time for a story on the commission, Brown took pains to draw a line between his commentary and the straight news report.

"This was Aaron's commentary," CNN spokeswoman Christa Robinson said. "Obviously, the views are his own and not the network's."

CNN considers itself primarily a news network with little commentary. However, business correspondent Lou Dobbs has recently raised eyebrows with his repeated condemnations of American corporations that move jobs overseas.

Prosecutors drop 7 charges vs R. Kelly

CHICAGO (AP)—Prosecutors dropped seven of 21 charges against R&B singer R. Kelly in his child pornography case, in what they described as a routine pretrial move Friday.

Kelly was arrested in June 2002 after a videotape surfaced allegedly showing him having sex with an underage girl. He remains charged with 14 counts of child pornography, and has pleaded innocent.

The seven counts dropped involved charges of soliciting a minor to appear in child pornography, said Jerry Lawrence,

spokesman for the Cook County state's attorney's office.

"It's a matter of course in cases like this that we'd drop charges right before trial," Lawrence said.

At a December court hearing, defense lawyer Edward Genson had moved to dismiss those counts, arguing the statute Kelly supposedly violated was enacted after the tape allegedly was shot.

A statement released Friday by the public relations firm that represents Kelly called the decision

to drop the seven charges "the first official acknowledgment of the weakness of their case." Genson said he had no comment.

No trial date has been set. The next hearing is April 2.

Kelly, whose first name is Robert, also has been charged with child pornography in Florida.

The 37-year-old singer is known for hits ranging from the Grammy-winning "I Believe I Can Fly" to sexually charged material such as "Ignition," off his recent double-platinum album, "Chocolate Factory."

Paul McCartney to play English festival

LONDON (AP)—Paul McCartney will be the headline act at his year's Glastonbury festival, the finale to his summer tour, organizers said Friday.

The former Beatle kicks off his month-long summer tour in May and will play 12 cities, including Madrid, Paris, Zurich, Gothenburg, Oslo and Helsinki—as well as Lisbon, Leipzig, Prague and St. Petersburg for the first time—before his Glastonbury date on June 26.

Glastonbury organizer Michael Eavis said he had to turn down an offer from McCartney to headline the event last year because Radiohead had already confirmed they would play the slot.

The summer tour will feature music from The Beatles, McCartney's band Wings and his solo work.

"Touring really has been a lot of fun for us and the audiences have been great. So why stop now?" he told reporters Friday. "I'm looking forward to playing and to visiting some new places."

McCartney, 61, became a



Paul McCartney is shown at The Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills, Calif., in this Sept. 23, 2003, file photo.

father again in October when his second wife, Heather Mills, gave birth to their daughter Beatrice.

Bridesmaid's alteration is not gift enough for bride

By AVIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: My best friend, "Sheila," was recently married, and I was a bridesmaid.

About two months before the wedding, Sheila called to say that the junior bridesmaid dress she had selected for one of her attendants was too small—size 8 for a girl who was size 12. Sheila asked if there was anything I could do to make the dress fit because it was too late to order another one.

After a lot of work and many long hours over a four-week period, I finished the alterations. Neither Sheila nor the junior bridesmaid paid me for the work, and I thought that was because I said I'd do it as a favor to Sheila.

A few days before the wedding, I was still deciding what to give her as a wedding gift, but everyone I asked said that altering the dress should be enough. Well, Sheila didn't see it that way. On her wedding night, she called me several times demanding a gift of money! She said I had been disrespectful by not giving her a gift. Even after her honeymoon, she called again to talk about the money.

Was I wrong not to give her a separate wedding gift?

FRIEND OF THE BRIDE
ON LONG ISLAND

DEAR FRIEND: For a bride to demand a gift shows an appalling lack of manners. I think that spending an entire month trying to ensure that Sheila had the wedding of her dreams was gift enough. If you have an itch to do so, scratch Sheila off your list, because she is no friend.

□ □ □ □ □

DEAR ABBY: Last July you kindly printed a letter from Christopher Reeve, the vice chairman of the National Organization on Disability (N.O.D.), in which he called on the communities of this country to enter N.O.D.'s Accessible America Contest. The letter generated substantial interest and 64 entries were received. Each one documented impressive efforts that towns and cities around the United States are making to enable their communities to be more welcoming and accessible, so that citizens and visitors with disabilities can fully participate in community life.

In your response to Christopher, you said you would share the name of the winning community when it was announced. Phoenix is the winner of the 2003 Accessible America Contest, which includes a \$25,000 prize underwritten by UPS. Phoenix joins Venice, Fla., and Irvine, Calif., the winners of the first two contests, as a model for other communities as they strive to be disability-friendly.

For further information about the contest, Phoenix's winning entry and N.O.D.'s Community Partnership Program, which provides guidance and assistance to towns and cities in their efforts to work with the disability community, readers can visit www.nod.org.

BREWSTER THACKERY, DIRECTOR
OF COMMUNICATIONS, N.O.D.

DEAR BREWSTER: Thank you for the update. And congratulations to the forward-thinking city of Phoenix for winning the Accessible America competition. It demonstrates the city's commitment to execute the plans and devote the funds to assure that everyone can fully participate in the life of the community. That's time and money well spent.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order "How to Have a Lovely Wedding." Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)



28 SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2004

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 29, 2004 27

Woods, Mickelson advance in Match Play

By **DOUG FERGUSON**
AP GOLF WRITER



CARLSBAD, Calif.

(AP)—Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson made short work of a long day at the Match Play Championship, both needing only 28 holes to win two matches and reach the quarterfinals.

Woods, who narrowly survived the first round, never trailed in both matches and never even made it to the 15th tee except for post-match interviews.

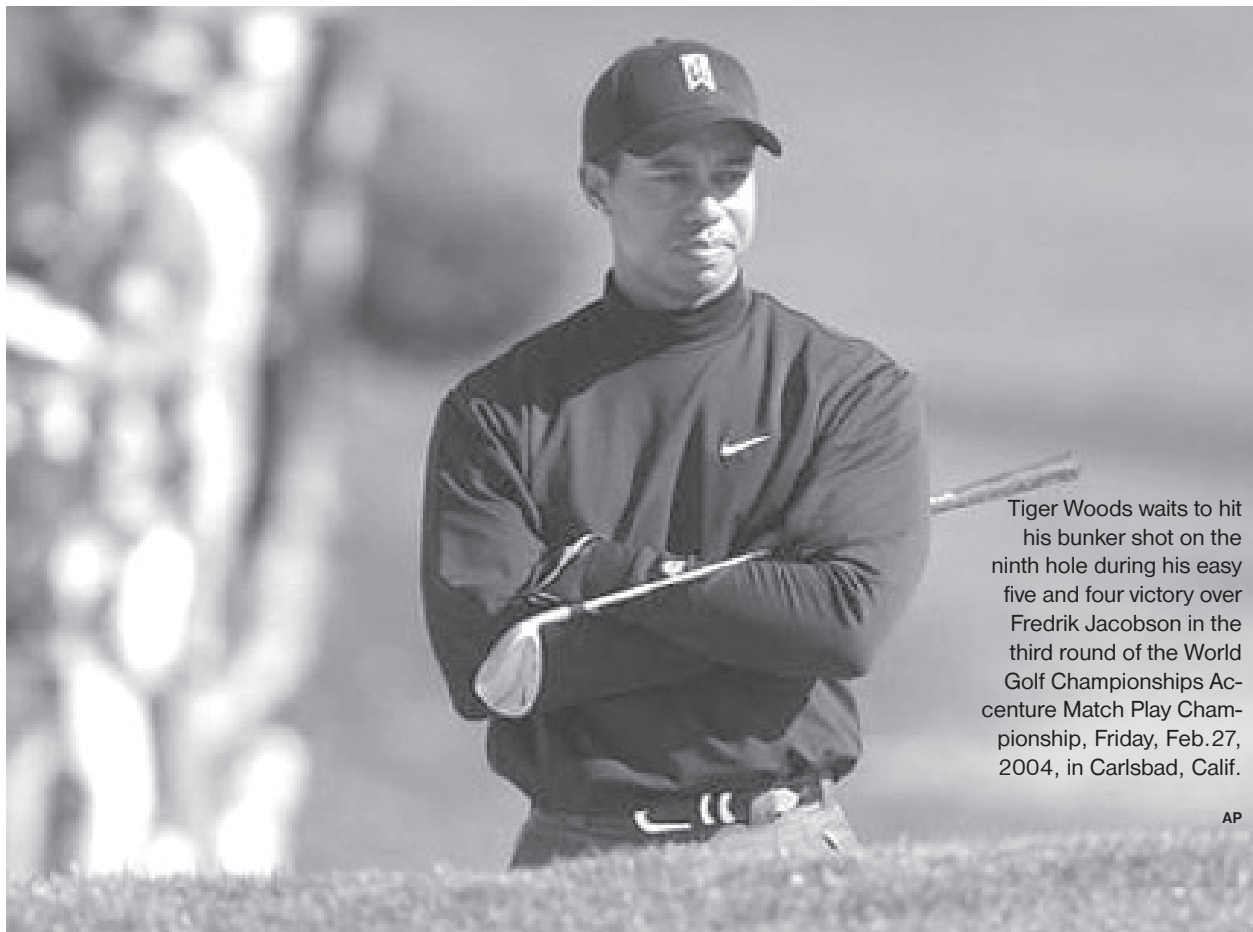
He jumped out to a big lead against Trevor Immelman in the second round, then steadied himself amid the wild adventures of Fredrik Jacobson, winning both matches, 5 and 4.

Woods set a tournament record by winning his ninth straight match. Next up is Padraig Harrington, who outlasted David Toms in 18 holes.

“For someone to make it through three matches, they’re probably playing pretty good,” Woods said.

Equally impressive is Mickelson, whose length and accuracy has proven to be a tough combination.

Mickelson never lost a hole in beating British Open champion Ben Curtis, 7 and 6, to tie the tournament record for largest margin of victory. Then, he overcame a hot start by Chris DiMarco to win, 3 and 2.



Tiger Woods waits to hit his bunker shot on the ninth hole during his easy five and four victory over Fredrik Jacobson in the third round of the World Golf Championships Accenture Match Play Championship, Friday, Feb. 27, 2004, in Carlsbad, Calif.

AP

Mickelson reached the quarterfinals for the first time in the Accenture Match Play Championship, getting there with only two bogeys through his first three matches, and 10 birdies in 28 holes Friday.

“Because I’ve kept it in play, the course seems to be so much easier,” Mickelson said. “You’d think after 33

years I’d figure that out.”

Mickelson (45) and Woods (46) have played fewer holes in three matches than anyone, although they’re only halfway home to the finals and a shot at the \$1.2 million prize.

Davis Love III might have had the easiest time.

After beating good friend Fred Cou-

ples in the morning, Love had about two hours before his third-round match against Adam Scott, a 23-hole winner over Robert Allenby.

In the most intense match of the day, Allenby holed two clutch par putts to stay in the match, then two long birdie putts only to see Scott halve the holes. Scott finally won when his fellow Aus-

sie missed a 2-foot par putt.

Scott had only enough time to eat before going back out, and Love never gave him much hope.

Love was 2 under on the front nine to take a 4-up lead, then held on for a 4-and-3 victory.

And the other five survivors looked good, too.

□ Jerry Kelly, who finds match play to be the closest thing golf comes to his beloved hockey, plowed through Vijay Singh in the second round, then built a 4-up lead and hung on against Chad Campbell, winning on the 18th hole.

□ Ian Poulter of England played only 30 holes Friday, taking advantage of sloppy play by Duffy Waldorf (7 and 5) and John Huston (2 and 1).

□ Darren Clarke, who beat Woods in the finals four years ago, hammered Alex Cejka of Germany in the morning and finished off Kenny Perry in the afternoon with a 50-foot birdie putt in the afternoon.

□ Stephen Leaney of Australia never trailed against Masters champion Mike Weir, holing out a bunker shot when it appeared the Canadian might get back into the match. In the third round, he ended Colin Montgomerie’s longest stay in San Diego with a par on the final hole to win, 1-up.

□ Harrington led by 4 at the turn and beat Bob Estes, then held off a late rally by Toms to win, 1 up.

Five of the top 10 seeds were still alive, the most star power ever this late in golf’s most unpredictable tournament.

Wood agrees to \$32.5M deal with Cubs



MESA, Ariz. (AP)

—Kerry Wood figures the Chicago Cubs are going places, and he wants to stick around and be part of the trip.

Wood agreed Friday to a \$32.5 million, three-year contract, the most lucrative deal for a pitcher in club history. It includes a mutual option for the 2007 that could increase the value to \$43 million.

“For me it was pretty simple. This organization gave me the opportunity when I was 18 years old to play professional baseball. That’s something I’ll never forget,” Wood said.

“It was pretty easy. We are going to be a good team for a long time. And that was the whole determining factor for me. ... The whole reason I play this game is to win, and I think we are going to do that here for a while.”

Once lovable losers, the Cubs came within five outs of making the World Series last season, and general manager Jim Hendry has been busy building on that. He signed several veterans, including Greg Maddux, to bolster an already formidable starting rotation that also features Mark Prior.

Wood, 26, had agreed last month to a one-year deal worth \$9.75 million. He would have been eligible for free agency after this season.

His new agreement calls for a \$3 million signing bonus, payable at \$1 million annually over three years, and salaries of \$7 million this season, \$8.5 million in 2005 and \$11 million in 2006. Wood also has a no-trade clause in those three years.

Owens’ free-agent status remains in doubt



Terrell Owens’ free-agent status remained in doubt Friday because of a procedural error that keeps him with the San Francisco 49ers for now.

But the free-agent market, which opens Wednesday, gained a number of lesser players as teams continued to make cuts to get under the NFL’s \$80.6 million salary cap.

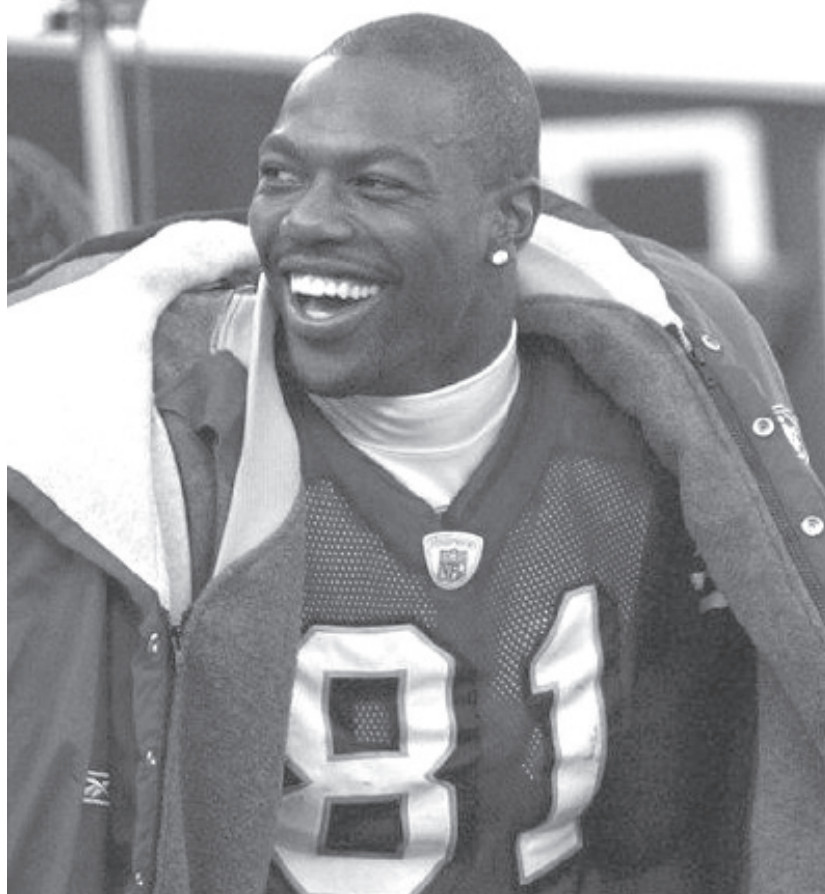
Owens and another wide receiver, Dennis Northcutt of Cleveland, expected to be free agents. But their agents failed to file letters with their teams voiding the final years of their contracts by the league-imposed deadline. So they remain the property of their current teams.

Owens’ agent, David Joseph, was preparing an appeal to the NFL Management Council, claiming that the filing date to void contracts had recently been moved forward 10 days - in Owens’ case to Feb. 21.

Owens, meanwhile, told Sporting News Radio he doesn’t know if he will demand a trade if forced to remain with San Francisco.

“Right now, I just want to be put in the situation where I am able to succeed as a person and basically take my talent through the roof,” he said. “I want to go to a team that has a championship in mind. Right now, I don’t really know what direction the organization is going in.”

Joseph has filed a grievance with the NFL Management Council through the players’ union, but a hearing hasn’t been scheduled. Owens blamed the league and the 49ers for his predicament.



AP

San Francisco 49ers wide receiver Terrell Owens smiles on the sidelines in the fourth quarter against the Arizona Cardinals in San Francisco, Calif., Sunday, Dec. 7, 2003.

“I can assure you that neither my agent nor myself made a mistake like this,” Owens told Sporting News Radio on Friday. “For people to go out and say my agent made a mistake is utterly ridiculous and insane.”

The 49ers also plan to decide on Monday whether to release quarter-

back Jeff Garcia.

Garcia, a three-time Pro Bowler and San Francisco’s starter since 1999, is in the midst of a difficult contract renegotiation with the 49ers, who want to reduce his salary significantly from the \$9.9 million he is due to make next season - or cut ties with him.

“We are going to look at all of our options this weekend,” general manager Terry Donahue said Friday.

Meanwhile, another big-name free agent, Warren Sapp, said he would like to remain in Tampa, where he has made the Pro Bowl seven times in nine seasons.

“It’s not about the money,” he said. “I collected \$40 million in the last nine years. I’m not going to sit here and tell you I should command a \$30 million or \$100 million deal.”

The Bucs are trying to restructure contracts just to get under the cap.

“We’re going to have to see what happens,” general manager Bruce Allen said. “Warren’s been a Buc through some tough times and some great times. He’s part of this neighborhood. He likes this neighborhood. He likes this coaching staff.”

“He’s going to see what free agency is and we’ll take it from there.”

In other developments:

□ The New York Jets cut cornerback Aaron Beasley, who had started 31 games the past two seasons, and signed Ricky Ray. He led Edmonton to the championship of the CFL last season. The Jets also said guard Dave Szott was retiring.

□ Pittsburgh released two former starters, cornerback Dwayne Washington and tight end Mark Breuner. The Steelers also re-signed kicker Jeff Reed.

□ Green Bay hired former Arizona coach Vince Tobin, who will serve as an advance scout and help with game plans. The Packers also re-signed backup safety Curtis Fuller.

□ Seattle waived defensive tackle Chad Eaton, an eight-year veteran. (AP)

Cleveland Cavaliers beat Orlando Magic, 112-107

ORLANDO, Florida (AP)—LeBron James scored six of his 30 points in overtime and Zydrunas Ilgauskas added 28 points to lead the Cleveland Cavaliers to a 112-107 victory Friday night over the Orlando Magic.

James, who committed an offensive foul on Cleveland's final possession of regulation, also had 11 rebounds as the Cavaliers won after blowing an 18-point fourth-quarter lead. Carlos Boozer added 17 points and 16 rebounds, and Jeff McInnis had 16 points and 10 assists.

"This guy is no young rookie, he's already a legitimate star in this league," said Magic forward Keith Bogans, who had the defensive assignment on James for much of the fourth quarter and overtime.

The Magic tied the game on three free throws by Tracy McGrady, who was fouled by Boozer on a 3-point attempt with nine seconds to play.

"LeBron is incredible, really," said McGrady, who led Orlando with 35 points. "Nothing rattles him at all. He's extremely confident and a real competitor. At the age of 19, that's scary."

Juwan Howard added 14 points and Drew Gooden had 14 points and 14 rebounds.

Timberwolves 91, Warriors 81

In Minneapolis, Kevin Garnett had 24 points, nine rebounds and nine assists as Minnesota beat Golden State for the first time this season.

Minnesota, which has now defeated every other NBA team this season, lost to the Warriors in both of their previous meetings.

The Wolves took the lead for good when Garnett beat Mike Dunleavy for an offensive rebound and the ball was swung to Fred Hoiberg for a 3-pointer to put Minnesota up 62-59. That basket keyed a 16-4 run that erased a 57-52 Warriors' lead.

Erick Dampier scored a season-high 24 points and had 19 rebounds for Golden State, and Jason Richardson scored 14 of his 18 points in the second half.

Celtics 88, Raptors 75

In Boston, in a matchup of teams with seven-game losing streaks, Paul Pierce scored 21 points and Brandon Hunter grabbed 16 rebounds in his second career start to lead Boston past Toronto.

The seven-game losing streak was the Celtics' longest since they dropped 10 in a row from March 20 to April 7, 2000.

The Raptors, who have dropped to seventh place in the East, held the lead only once in the first quarter and never rebounded from a nearly three-

minute scoring drought in which the Celtics took a 30-18 lead.

Boston's advantage swelled to as many as 26 points, 63-37, in the third quarter.

Hornets 89, Pacers 77

In New Orleans, Jamal Mashburn scored 22 and Baron Davis 18, and New Orleans snapped Indiana's four-game winning streak.

Austin Croshere's 3-pointer pulled Indiana to 78-70 with a little over four minutes to go, then Davis took control.

He answered with a 3 of his own, drew a charge on Al Harrington's drive, then slipped a pass underneath to P.J. Brown for a dunk, putting the Hornets up 83-72 with three minutes left. Mashburn's turnaround fade with 2:16 left finished off the Pacers.

Jamaal Magloire finished with 16 points and 11 rebounds. Brown added 17 points for the Hornets, who are the only team to beat Indiana since the All-Star break.

Pistons 105, Hawks 83

In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Chauncey Billups and Richard Hamilton each had 20 points, and four other Detroit Pistons scored in double figures to thrash Atlanta.

Rasheed Wallace didn't do much—and didn't have to—against the team he played just one game for before being traded to Detroit. He made just two of 10 shots and had six points and six rebounds.

Detroit has won three straight after losing its first two games with Wallace.

Stephen Jackson scored 16 for the Hawks, who have lost four of five, and Bob Sura tied a season high with 14 points.

Detroit reserves Corliss Williamson scored 17 and Mike James, acquired from Boston in the Wallace trade, had 13 points and seven assists.

Rockets 89, Trail Blazers 85

In Houston, Steve Francis had 21 points and a season-high five steals as Houston snapped Portland's five-game winning streak.

Francis fed Maurice Taylor in the lane for a basket with 1:49 to play, then hit a jumper with 1:03 to go for an 89-81 lead.

Cuttino Mobley added 16 points and Yao Ming had 13.

Derek Anderson led Portland with 22 points and Randolph had 17 points and 17 rebounds, three short of his career high.

Bucks 106, Grizzlies 104

In Milwaukee, Keith Van Horn tied his season high with 30 points in his first start for Milwaukee.

Van Horn came off the bench in his first four games after be-

ing acquired from New York on Feb. 15, but with Joe Smith out with an injured left ankle he got his first start.

Michael Redd's free throw shot with 22 seconds left gave the Bucks a 105-104 lead, but his second shot hit the front of the rim and Shane Battier grabbed the rebound.

With 5.3 seconds left, Battier caught an inbounds pass from Jason Williams and had a good look at the basket, but he missed the shot from the top of the key.

Suns 104, SuperSonics 99

In Seattle, Amare Stoudemire scored 24 points as Phoenix beat Seattle to win two successive games for the first time since mid-January.

Shawn Marion had 18 points and 13 rebounds for the Suns, who got two crucial baskets from Howard Easley in the final three minutes. Easley wound up with 16 points. Joe Johnson added 17, including 10 in the final quarter.

The Suns, who have the worst record in the Western Conference (20-40), won for just the seventh time on the road this season. They ended an eight-game losing streak earlier this week.

Jazz 102, Kings 97

In Sacramento, California, Andrei Kirilenko had 24 points and 14 rebounds as Utah handed Sacramento its fifth home loss of the season.

Kirilenko scored the final four points for Utah, which snapped Sacramento's four-game winning streak.

Peja Stojakovic missed a potential game-tying 3-pointer in the closing seconds, and Kirilenko made a fast-break dunk at the final buzzer. Reserve guard Maurice Williams scored 19 points and Raja Bell came off the bench for 15.

Greg Ostertag, who had two key baskets in the final three minutes, finished with eight points and 14 rebounds.

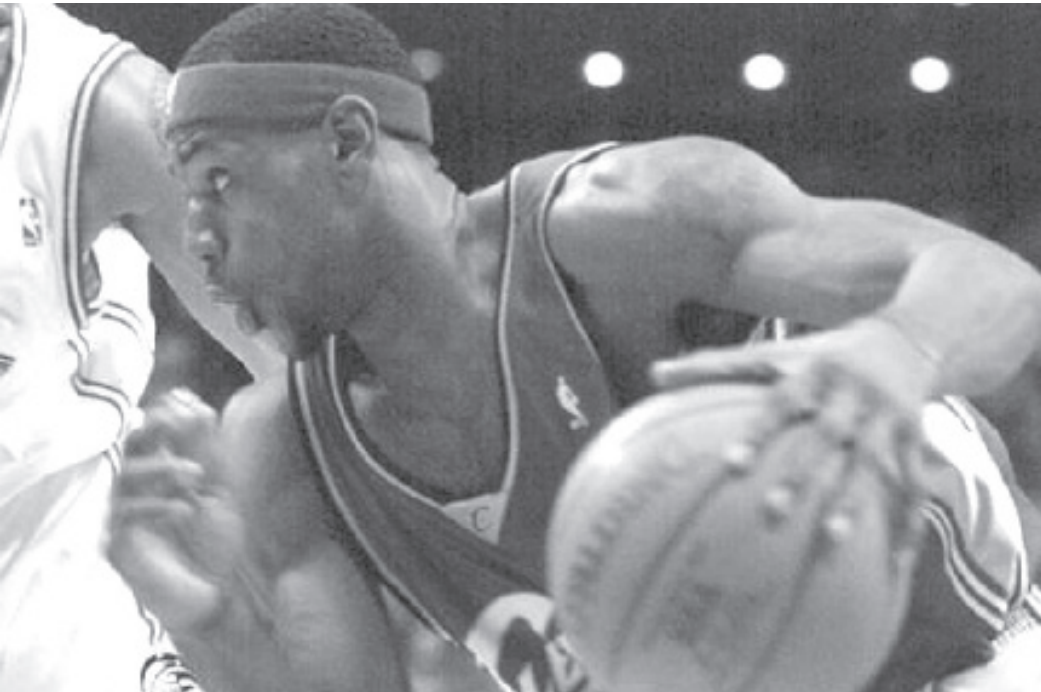
Clippers 96, Knicks 94

In Los Angeles, Quentin Richardson scored 23 points and Bobby Simmons hit go-ahead 6-meter (19-foot) with 21.3 seconds remaining as the Los Angeles Clippers extended the New York Knicks' losing streak to five games.

Elton Brand had 19 points and 12 rebounds for the Clippers, who had lost seven of their previous nine games.

Stephon Marbury had 29 points and nine assists and Tim Thomas added 22 points for New York, which is 10-10 since Lenny Wilkens replaced Don Chaney as head coach.

Kurt Thomas shot an airball from 5 meters (17 feet) just before the final buzzer.



Cleveland Cavaliers' LeBron James drives to the basket against the Orlando Magic during the second quarter in Orlando, Fla., Friday, Feb. 27, 2004.

Tribune Sports Scores

NBA STANDINGS

EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
New Jersey	35	21	.625	—
New York	26	34	.433	11
Miami	25	33	.431	11
Boston	24	36	.400	13
Philadelphia	23	35	.397	13
Washington	18	38	.321	17
Orlando	16	44	.267	21

Central Division

Indiana	42	16	.724	—
Detroit	37	24	.607	6 1/2
New Orleans	32	26	.552	10
Milwaukee	31	27	.534	11
Toronto	25	33	.431	17
Cleveland	24	35	.407	18 1/2
Atlanta	19	39	.328	23
Chicago	16	42	.276	26

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Midwest Division

Minnesota	43	16	.729	—
San Antonio	38	20	.655	4 1/2
Dallas	37	20	.649	5
Houston	34	24	.586	8 1/2
Memphis	34	24	.586	8 1/2
Denver	32	27	.542	11
Utah	30	30	.500	13 1/2

Pacific Division

Sacramento	42	15	.737	—
L.A. Lakers	36	20	.643	5 1/2
Portland	29	29	.500	13 1/2
Seattle	26	32	.448	16 1/2
Golden State	25	32	.439	17
L.A. Clippers	25	32	.439	17
Phoenix	20	40	.333	23 1/2

MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL

EAST

Brown 77, Dartmouth 54
Colgate 54, Lehigh 48
Holy Cross 72, Bucknell 61
Iona 91, St. Peter's 79
Monmouth, N.J. 87, St. Francis, NY 82
Ohio Dominican 56, Rio Grande 51
Penn 84, Cornell 69
Princeton 75, Columbia 52
St. Vincent 71, Geneva 68
Yale 80, Harvard 62

SOUTH

Berea 72, Asbury 71
Kentucky Christian 100, Johnson Bible 85
Pfeiffer 108, St. Andrew's 85
Spalding 59, Bethel, Tenn. 55
Trinity, Texas 67, Millsaps 53
Troy St. 113, Jacksonville 73

MIDWEST

Buena Vista 94, Coe 69
Doane 71, Northwestern, Iowa 64
Franklin 81, Manchester 53
Hanover 79, Defiance 54
Iowa Wesleyan 86, Grand View 61
Minn.-Mankato 90, N. Dakota St. 85
Nebraska-Omaha 74, S. Dakota St. 63
Presentation 74, Martin Luther 71
Sioux Falls 73, Morningside 68
Southwest St., Minn. 71, Wayne, Neb. 69
St. Cloud St. 86, North Dakota 83

Wartburg 85, Simpson, Iowa 72
Webster 90, Mac Murray 74
William Jewell 79, Benedictine, Kan. 76
William Penn 81, Mount Mercy 56
Winona St. 73, Minn.-Moorhead 67

SOUTHWEST

No scores reported from the SOUTHWEST.

FAR WEST

No scores reported from the FAR WEST.

TOURNAMENT

Big South

Semifinals

Methodist 83, N.C. Wesleyan 71

CIAA Tournament

Semifinals

N.C. Central 78, Fayetteville St. 74
Virginia Union 81, Virginia St. 59

CUNY Athletic Conference

Championship

Lehman 75, NYCCT 69

Florida Sun Conference

Semifinals

Embry-Riddle 78, Webber 74
Flagler 79, Warner Southern 60

Midwest Conference

Semifinals

Carroll, Wis. 143, Grinnell 127
Lawrence 68, Lake Forest 63

NEWMAC Conference

Semifinals

Babson 79, MIT 32
Springfield 81, Worcester Tech 65

Ohio Conference

Semifinals

John Carroll 79, Ohio Northern 62
Mount Union 82, Otterbein 73

SUNY Athletic Conference

Semifinals

Brookport 71, Cortland St. 42
Potsdam 52, Plattsburgh 48

UCAA Tournament

Semifinals

Hamilton 79, Clarkson 68
RPI 77, St. Lawrence 71

Upper Midwest Athletic Conference

First Round

St. Scholastica 74, Northwestern, Minn. 73

SPORTS TRANSACTIONS

MLB

ANAHEIM ANGELS-Agreed to terms with INF Alfredo Amezaga, INF Tim Lincecum, LHP Tom Gregorio, C Chone Figgins, INF-OF Bobby Jenks, RHP Greg Jones, RHP Dallas McPherson and INF Jose Molina on one-year contracts.

BALTIMORE ORIOLES-Agreed to terms with LHP Eric DuBose, LHP Matt Riley, INF Jose Bautista, LHP Erik Bedard, RHP Daniel Cabrera, RHP Dave Crouthers, LHP Brian Forystek, LHP Ryan Hannaman, OF Darnell McDonald, OF Tim Lincecum Jr. and 1B Walter Young on one-year contracts.

SEATTLE MARINERS-Agreed to terms with RHP Julio Mateo, RHP Clint Nageotte, RHP J.J. Putz, RHP Aaron Taylor, INF Justin Leone and OF Chris Snelling on one-year contracts.

CHICAGO CUBS-Agreed to terms with RHP Kerry Wood on a three-year contract.

CINCINNATI REDS-Agreed to terms with RHP Aaron Harang and OF Willy Mo Pena on one-year contracts.

HOUSTON ASTROS-Agreed to terms with INF Eric Bruntlett, RHP Brandon Duckworth, RHP Tim Lincecum and RHP Ricky Stone on one-year contracts.

MONTREAL EXPOS-Agreed to terms with RHP Sun-woo Kim, LHP Randy Choate and OF Brandon Watson on one-year contracts.

NEW YORK METS-Agreed to terms with INF Ty Wigginton, INF Craig Brazell, INF Aaron Baldiris and RHP Orber Moreno on one-year contracts.

NBA

ATLANTA HAWKS-Signed C Hiram Fuller to a 10-day contract.

NEW JERSEY NETS-Waived F Eddie Griffin.

SAN ANTONIO SPURS-Released G Ron Mercer. Activated G Jason Hart from the injured list.

WNBA

INDIANA FEVER-Signed G-F Kate Starbird.

NFL

DENVER BRONCOS-Signed LB Al Wilson to a seven-year contract.

GREEN BAY PACKERS-Re-signed S Curtis Fuller to a one-year contract. Waived DT John Hilliard. Named Vince Tobin special assistant and James Campen assistant offensive line coach-quality control. Promoted Joe Philbin to tight ends-assistant offensive line coach.

INDIANAPOLIS COLTS-Released DE Chad Bratzke, CB Walt Harris, QB, Brock Huard, OT Adam Meadows and RB Detron Smith.

NEW YORK JETS-Signed QB Ricky Ray. Released CB Aaron Beasley. Announced the retirement of G Dave Szott.

PITTSBURGH STEELERS-Released CB Dewayne Washington and TE Mark Breuner. Re-signed K Jeff Reed to a one-year contract.

SEATTLE SEAHAWKS-Waived DT Chad Eaton.

COLLEGE

KANSAS-Announced the retirement of Marian Washington, women's basketball coach, effective immediately.

LIBERTY-Named Frank Hickson running backs coach, Biff Parson quarterbacks coach, Charlie Skalaski wide receivers coach and Marshall Roberts defensive backs coach. Announced that defensive line coach Mickey Mays will also coach special teams.

MICHIGAN STATE-Named Ed Tolentino assistant women's volleyball coach.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA-Suspended G Errick Craven and G Derrick Craven one game each for their actions during a Feb. 21 game.

SOUTHERN METHODIST-Fired Mike Dement, men's basketball coach.

TOWSON-Promoted defensive secondary coach Orlando Mitjans to defensive coordinator.

By The Associated Press

The Week in Sports

Busy week for bowling and tennis

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO AND SHAN SEMAN, REPORTERS

Tennis and bowling shared the limelight even as an annual regatta got going despite bad sailing conditions the past week in sports.

NMITA concluded its 2004 Coconut Classic last Sunday with grizzled veteran Jeff Race and youth netter Mayuko Arriola topping the men and women's open categories. Other winners of the tournament were Eli,

Ralph and Russell Buenaventura, Ven Jie Decena, and Kanani Ashraf.

Bowling, meanwhile, celebrated a couple of events. Last February 13, the PBA Mid-Year Classified Tournament hailed Mark Halstead as champion of Class A, Raymond Zapanta champion of Class B, and Lito Teodoro champion of Class C.

Then on Tuesday, sports patron Benjamin "Kappon" Sablan kept his

promise and gave Jonathan Halstead \$3,000 for rolling a perfect score last February 10. The 18-year-old junior bowler also took home \$500 and a handsome plaque from the Saipan Bowling Association.

Tony Stearns and Janet McCullough then topped the 29th sailing of the Saipan Laguna Regatta last weekend. Their Hobbie Cat was actually one of only two boats that completed the race due to strong winds and high surf during the event.



Kanani Ashraf serves in the girls 10-and-under division of the 2004 NMITA Coconut Classic. Ashraf was champion of the division.
DR. MOHAMMAD ASHRAF



Mayuko Arriola waits to pounce on a service in her women's open game against Letty Jones. Arriola took two championships in the Coconut Classic—the women's open and girls 14-and-under.



Raymond Zapanta, second from right, receives his first place trophy in Class B. In photo with Zapanta are second place Roger Vales, third place Ernie Villarin, and mom and dad Gigi and Ross Zapanta.

Charlie Sablan of CPA tries to get the rebound in their Mobil game against CUC last Tuesday. CUC let a big lead evaporate before winning 84-78.



Tony Luzama of the Ol' Aces attempts a shot in the paint against the C.K. Legends during last Saturday's 40-and-over Masters Basketball League action at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

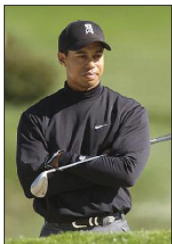
Work continues on the track and field facility just north of the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.



Mario Mayuga and Lynn Teregeyo hold up their trophies after winning second and third place in Class C of PBA Mid-Year Classified Tournament.



Pirates hitter James Kintol looks at third base coach Roy Celis (not in photo) prior to an at bat during last Saturday's Senior League game against the Ol'Aces at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.



Woods, Mickelson advance in Match Play

Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson made short work of a long day at the Match Play Championship, both needing only 28 holes to win two matches and reach the quarterfinals.

25

Saipan Tribune Sports

Busy week for bowling and tennis

Tennis and bowling shared the limelight even as an annual regatta got going despite bad sailing conditions the past week in sports.

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SAIPAN TRIBUNE



Jonathan Hensley, second from right, with his dad Don, mom Riza, and girlfriend Madonna.

Rearing bowling perfection

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY MARK RABAGO
REPORTER

Don Hensley was a skeptical dad when he first heard the news that his son, Jonathan, achieved a bowling milestone last February 10.

"He called me up on the phone and told me he just rolled a perfect score. I kept on asking him, 'Are you sure, son? Are you really sure?'" said the elder Hensley.

But when Don finally figured out that what Jonathan was saying was actually the real deal, he was overcome with emotion and told his son to sit tight.

Unable to come down to the Saipan Bowling Center himself, Don immediately called up his wife, Riza, who works as a teacher at William S. Reyes Elementary School, and asked her to be with Jonathan during the special moment.

Don and Riza both agreed that Jonathan's bowling prowess was evident even at an early age.

"We are both bowling enthusiasts. And we could honestly say that all our children, and not only Jonathan, literally grew up in the bowling lanes," said Riza.

In their recollection, Jonathan first picked up a bowling bowl at age seven and from then on has been enamored with the sport.

But as Riza volunteers, Jonathan's life-long passion for the sport began way before that and probably started even when he was still in her womb.

"I kept on playing until my eighth month when I was pregnant with Jonathan. My husband and I just love the sport, and in hindsight, it was probably a sign of bigger and better things to come," she said.



The youth bowler poses with his perfect 300 score on acetate.

Years later when his dad had to leave his local team in the Tuesday night league, Jonathan was asked to take his place.

And the younger Hensley didn't miss a step and has steadily become one of the better youth bowlers on Saipan.

The local bowling federation has also took notice of his promise and in the past has sent him to regional competitions held in Guam, Taiwan, Singapore, Japan, and the Philippines.

The morning before he rolled the sport's equivalent of a pitcher's no-hit, no-walk, complete

game in baseball and gymnast Nadia Comaneci's string of 10s in the 1976 Olympics, Hensley had no inkling of what the day had in store for him.

In fact, he was supposed to call in sick for the Tuesday tourney after getting off from work at Blue Sea Sports.

After an abysmal 182 in the first game, Jonathan went on a hot streak in the second game. It was only after rolling his seventh strike that he began flirting with the idea of a perfect game. And the rest, as they say, is history.

Prior to that fateful night, the closest to perfection Jonathan came to was when he bowled a 287 in 2000.

Riza said that his son's perfect score couldn't have come at a better time. The Dumaguete City, Philippines native said that Jonathan's rare achievement deflected a bit of sadness she and her husband felt because the same night also coincided with their older son, Jayson, being shipped out to Iraq from U.S. bases in Germany.

Jonathan, who grew up idolizing Puerto Rican kegler Amleto Moacelle and his mentor Mark Halstead, joined Benny Pangelinan and Jaime Sasamoto as the only three local bowlers to roll a score of 300.

But what made the feat more remarkable wasn't because it took nearly 22 years before another player did the trick; rather it was because it took an 18-year-old junior bowler to achieve the bowling milestone.

Halstead summed it perfectly when he said, "It's every bowlers' dream to roll that perfect score. And it's amazing that Jonathan was able to accomplish it at such a young age."